FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SPEED ART MUSEUM UNVEILS 195-YEAR-OLD KENTUCKY PAINTING ON LOAN FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

Louisville, KY: The Speed Art Museum and the Archdiocese of Louisville have partnered to share with the public a recently conserved 195-year-old painting by renowned Kentucky artist Matthew Harris Jouett. Painted in Lexington in 1824, The Dead Christ Mourned (The Three Maries), after Carracci, will be unveiled at the Speed Art Museum, 2035 South Third Street, on Saturday, October 12 at Noon.

Kentucky portrait artist, Matthew Harris Jouett, painted with the assistance of his apprentice, John Grimes, an enlarged copy of Annibale Carracci’s The Dead Christ Mourned (The Three Maries). Jouett died in 1827 at age 39. The painting was valued at $100 and was eventually placed up for auction later that same year. The buyer is unknown. The exact date and details of its arrival in Louisville are yet to be found, but clues indicate it could have hung as early as 1845 in the former Cathedral of St. Louis, which was on the same site as the present-day Cathedral of the Assumption in downtown Louisville.

In the current Cathedral, which was completed in 1852, the painting hung above the organ and remained there until it was removed in the mid-1970s during an interior renovation and placed into the Cathedral Museum next door. After being stored at two other locations, the painting and original frame suffered extensive damage in 2003 while being transported. A campaign began in 2015 for its complete conservation, led by Tim Tomes, Archivist for the Archdiocese of Louisville.

The original frame, likely made in Lexington by James D. Mcintosh in the 1830s, has also been restored.

Away from the public eye for almost 50 years and now completely restored, The Dead Christ Mourned (The Three Maries), after Carracci, will remain on display at the Speed through May 2020.
“I am thrilled to share the wonderful heritage of the Catholic Church in Central Kentucky with the public through this partnership with the Speed Art Museum. I thank everyone involved with this effort, especially the donors who made this possible, Tim Tomes, our Archivist, who worked on this project from the beginning, and of course the Speed Art Museum. I am grateful for our history of collaboration. Together we have saved a treasure of our Church and an important piece of Kentucky history,” said Archbishop Joseph Kurtz.

“We are thrilled to showcase this painting at the Speed. Not only is it an historically important painting for the state of Kentucky, but we have an opportunity to present it in a way that tells a great story. It’s important for our visitors to have a glimpse behind-the-scenes at the museum, and to feature the expertise, talents, and skills of the many people who work to preserve artworks such as this for generations to come,” stated Erika Holmquist-Wall, The Mary and Barry Bingham Sr., Curator of American and European Painting and Sculpture.

Conservation of the painting was completed by Cleveland based, ICA-Art Conservation. Conservation of the frame was completed by Washington D.C. based, Gold Leaf Studios.

The Speed Art Museum is open Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM; Friday: 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM; Sunday: 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM. Closed Monday & Tuesday. For more information visit: www.speedmuseum.org.

About the Speed Art Museum
The Speed Art Museum is Kentucky’s largest art museum. Its mission is to “invite everyone to celebrate art forever.” An independent and encyclopedic museum located on the campus of the University of Louisville. In 1927, Louisville philanthropist Hattie Bishop Speed founded the Speed Art Museum, with a belief in the power of art to change people’s lives. The Speed Art Museum is free on Sunday through March of 2021, thanks in part to Brown-Forman. After Hours @ the Speed events draw large and diverse crowds every third Friday of the month with music, drinks, and of course art. More information at www.speedmuseum.org/events-programs.

The Speed’s current exhibitions are Ebony G. Patterson…while the dew is still on the roses…. and GONZO: The Illustrated Guide to Hunter S. Thompson. More information at www.speedmuseum.org/exhibitions.

About the Archdiocese of Louisville
Founded as the first inland diocese in the United States in 1808, the Archdiocese of Louisville consists of 24 counties in Central Kentucky with 110 parishes serving more than 185,000 Catholics. For more information, see www.archlou.org

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Images available upon request.